



Issaquah Alps TRAILS CLUB

— EST. 1979 —

Dedicated to engaging the public to preserve, protect, and promote the land, wildlife, and trails of the Issaquah Alps, for future and present generations.

Newsletter of the Issaquah Alps Trails Club

THE ALPINER

Give back to your trails in 2021!

If you haven't had a chance to support us yet this year, consider [making a gift today!](#)

If you're over 70, you can make a tax free gift using your IRA.

Learn more about supporting the organizations you love with an IRA from [one of our past articles.](#)

If you want to get involved with the IATC please fill out our [volunteer form](#) and let us know what you are interested in.

Upcoming Hikes and Events

Check our calendar on the [website](#) for more hikes and events coming in the new year.

Intrepid Trail Workers Honored with Award

Tom Anderson - December 9, 2021

The Washington Trails Association held their annual Volunteer Awards program on November 18, and two of our own were honored with induction into the prestigious "Crosscut Saw Club" for 500+ days of trail work. Kudos to Cornelia Remy and George Potter for achieving this milestone (to date, achieved by only 39 people).

Cornelia relates that it was the construction of the Margaret's Way trail on Squak Mountain that got her hooked on trail work. It was a new trail that needed a concerted effort to prepare for the grand opening. It became a regular part of her life, and has continued as such to this day. George, too, was a regular worker on the Margaret's Way trail during the initial construction.

Congratulations to Cornelia and George.



George Potter (left) and Cornelia Remy (right) out in their natural habitat - a trail work party.

Issaquah Alps Photo Contest Winner

Hannah Wheeler - December 20, 2021



Photo by Wendy Harrington

Congratulations to our photo contest winner Wendy Harrington! Our board selected this amazing photo capturing some sunbeams on the newly remodeled Poo Poo Point trail.

Thank you to everyone who participated- we loved all the photos that were submitted showing off the beauty of the places we live and recreate in.

Check out a few of the other finalist photos:



Image by Chris Pribbernow



Image by Louise Kornreich



Image by Siddhartha Singh

City of Issaquah Passes Climate Action Plan

Anne Newcomb - December 19, 2021

On December 6th the Issaquah City Council voted unanimously to adopt Issaquah's first [Climate Action Plan](#)!

The plan includes a mix of both mitigation and adaptation strategy actions.

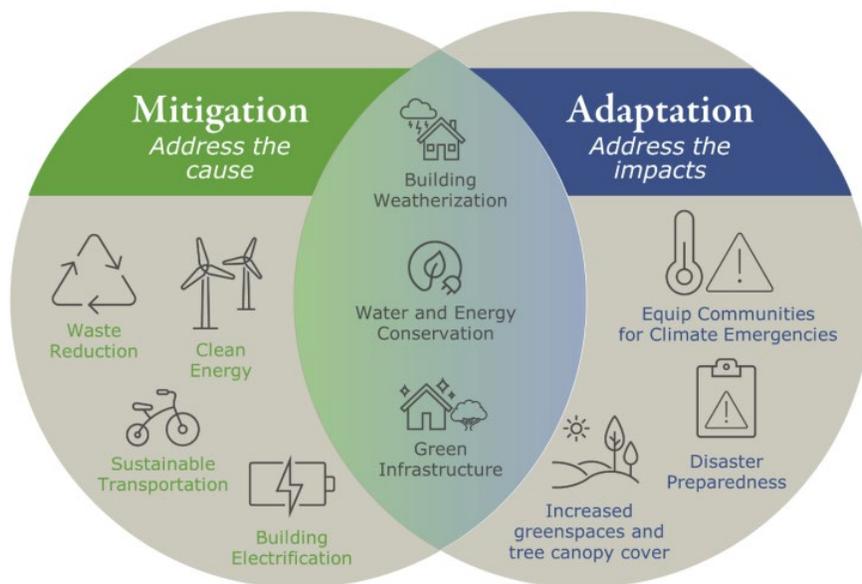


Image from City of Issaquah Climate Action Plan

- Mitigation actions address the cause of climate change by reducing GHG emissions and increasing carbon "sinks" to store these gases. Examples include: Clean Energy, Waste Reduction, Sustainable Transportation, Building Electrification and Weatherization. Mitigation Targets and Metrics = 50% decrease in GHG emissions by 2030, 75% decrease by 2040, 95% decrease GHG emissions & net zero emissions by 2050
- Adaptation actions address and manage the impacts of climate change by protecting vulnerable social and biological systems. Despite local mitigation efforts, we must still prepare for and adapt to the unavoidable impacts of climate change we are already experiencing. Examples include: Equip Communities for climate emergencies, Disaster preparedness, Increased green spaces and tree canopy cover, Water and energy conservation

The City of Issaquah's vision:

- Collaborate closely with neighboring communities leading by example

- Educate and engage residents and businesses to inspire behavior change and foster accountability in addressing climate change
- Thoughtful and intentional approach to climate action, taking this opportunity to address existing inequities in our community and enhance livability for all Issaquah residents

Our Vision for Issaquah

Through bold and aggressive climate action, we will reduce emissions and increase community resilience to climate impacts.

We will collaborate closely with neighboring communities and lead by example in our own City operations to establish Issaquah as a regional leader.

We will educate and engage our residents and businesses to inspire behavior change and foster accountability in addressing climate change.

We will be thoughtful and intentional in our approach to climate action, taking this opportunity to address existing inequities in our community and enhance livability for all Issaquah residents.

How we will get there...



Image from City of Issaquah Climate Action Plan

The Issaquah Alps Trails Club (IATC) has been a part of the process from the beginning when we were helping to organize Issaquah's first Community Convening on Climate workshops which brought the community together to help develop a plan to address climate change including meeting our [King County-Cities Climate Collaboration \(K4C\)](#) emission reduction goals, and were originally planned to be in person but due to the pandemic were successfully held virtually.

The [Issaquah People for Climate Action](#) team, led by Ann Fletcher, was the driving force behind the Community Convening on Climate workshops. At the workshops it became clear the community wanted to have a good plan to move forward with reducing Issaquah's greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and ensure Issaquah is prepared as our climate changes.

The newly formed Issaquah Environmental Board not only helped with the creation of the plan but will oversee the progress in years to come. Long time IATC Board member Tom Anderson and IATC President Elect Anne Newcomb also serve on the Environmental Board.

Continued and increased community involvement will be necessary for us to accomplish these important goals! You can check out the [Climate Action Plan here](#) and you can always find it and how to participate on the City of Issaquah web site.

IATC is very grateful to the City of Issaquah and Sustainability Department for making this happen!

Hiking 101: Winter Hiking

Ash Lehto - December 20, 2021



Winter is officially upon us, but that doesn't mean that the hiking season has come to an end. Whether there be rain or snow, or even a few brief respites of sun, the outdoor adventures can carry on - and in some ways, they can be even more beautiful. When the days get shorter and the sky gets cloudier, you may either find less people out on the trails or join the migration up to snowier spaces. If you're not interested in snow but unwilling to take a break from the trail, you can always consider finding coastal hikes or staying in the lowlands. But whether you choose to embrace the rain, slush, or snow, it's important to be prepared for a winter adventure in Washington.

Winter hiking doesn't have to mean more dangerous; you just need to be prepared for the different conditions that you'll face. You also may need to be more mindful of the weather and where you're going. There are several things that you can do to make sure that you are prepared for a wonderful winter hike in Washington.

Check trail conditions and weather.

Obviously you should always check weather when you're going on a hike no matter what time of year, so that you're not caught unprepared if the weather turns quickly. But while in summer it might be more about a matter of comfort, in winter it becomes especially important. Whether you're trekking up into the mountains or staying at lower elevations, winter can have an impact on the safety of your hike. Check to see if your trail has washed out or become flooded (are your boots waterproof? Wet socks are never fun!), or if there's enough snow on the ground that you'll want microspikes to help with your stability - they can make a world of difference! If you find yourself heading high up into the mountains, you might be looking at a snowshoe trip instead of a hike, and you will want to be prepared or face a very tedious trek.

Start early.

One downside of winter is that the days are shorter, meaning that an afternoon hike can easily end in darkness. While it's not impossible to hike downhill in the dark, if you're not prepared it can make for a treacherous and tiresome end to your day. You don't want to be caught in a downpour using your phone for light! And if you find yourself running out of daylight but haven't reached the goal of your hike, never be afraid to turn around. Remember, it's about the journey and not the destination!

Check road conditions.

In summer and fall often the greatest challenges to your trip to the trailhead are traffic and potholes. But come winter, you also have to deal with floods, fallen trees, and ice and snow. Check the conditions of the road before you head out - do you need chains? Should you have kitty litter in your car to help you if you get stuck? Is the road impassable? Check out the [WSDOT mountain passes](#) webpage for real-time data about driving conditions.

Assess your own comfort and driving skills as well. It's never too late to learn to drive in the snow, but you don't want to be learning in the middle of a blizzard! Check out these [12 tips to learn how to drive in snow safely](#).

Dress for success and pack what you need.

Everyone says it, and we'll say it again: *Pack your [10 essentials](#)!* But in addition to that, be sure that you are dressing appropriately and bringing the extra winter gear. For example, shovels for snow and avalanche beacons are a good idea if you're heading up high. If you're prone to getting cold, you may also want to bring extra clothing items (such as a change of socks) or hand and foot warmers.

We already mentioned having microspikes and/or snowshoes depending on where you'll be (and in winter, having [microspikes or crampons](#) packed just in case is never a bad idea anyway) but you'll also want to ensure that your boots and clothes are ready for the Great Cold and Wet. Make sure that your boots are insulated and ideally waterproof, to keep your feet warm and dry. Wear layers that you can strip as you hike; you want to avoid wearing wet and sweaty clothing as it can cause you to chill quickly when you've stopped moving. Cotton takes forever to dry, so it's not something that you'll ever want to wear in winter. Wool, polyester, fleece, and other materials are what you'll want to stay warm. Additionally, make sure that your outer layer is waterproof - both your jacket and your pants. And finally, don't ever forget those gloves and a hat to care for your extremities!

Know the snow.

If you do find yourself traveling to high elevations, it's especially important to be aware of the dangers of snow. While breathtaking and beautiful, snow can have its own challenges. You'll want to check on the weather and [avalanche forecast conditions](#) before heading out. The Northwest Avalanche Center also has some [great tips and tricks](#) to staying safe in the snowy Cascades. If you want to take things to the next level and be extra prepared, or find yourself spending a lot more time in snowy spaces, consider taking a [free Avalanche Awareness course](#) from the NWAC.

You may also want to familiarize yourself with other dangers that you can come across. For instance, [tree wells](#) are the space at the base of a tree covered by its branches where the snow is loosely packed, and can be dangerous to fall into. Additionally, [snow cornices](#), which are overhanging ledges of snow, are unsafe to walk on as they can give out under even a little weight. Be aware of your surroundings, whether it be loose snow or thin ice, and always use common sense when you're on the trail.

Make your ride back warm and comfortable.

This one is less about safety and more about making the most of your post-hike trip. For example, keep a change of clothes handy in case you need to strip out of your wet socks and pants (and a towel to dry off is never a bad idea). A spare pair of shoes for driving will keep your car cleaner and your feet more comfortable. If you have a long drive back in difficult conditions (such as in traffic and snow) make sure that you use the bathroom so you can focus on the road. Finally, consider keeping some tea, coffee, or hot cocoa stored in a thermos in your vehicle, ready and waiting to help you warm up your insides on the trip home.

While Washington has fantastic summers, our winters still have a lot to offer. You don't have to hold off on your explorations just because the clouds have come out to play. So bundle up, check out [WTA for winter hike ideas](#), and we'll see you out on the trail!

The Apparatus

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